



Internal Audit Department Parks and Recreation Department – Park Usage Permit Audit A2025-01

Objectives

The objectives of this audit were to determine if the Parks and Recreation Department:

- Has an established process for issuing Park Usage Permits.
- Has established criteria for the need of a Park Usage Permit.
- Has Policies and Procedures for the issuance of Park Usage Permits.
- Is charging Permit Fees accurately.
- Is following up/enforcing Park Usage Permits.

Scope

The scope of September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024 included:

- Reviewing departmental Policies and Procedures.
- Obtaining an understanding of the Open Park Space Permitting process.
- Conducting interviews with Parks personnel.
- Selecting a sample of issued Open Park Space Permits.

Finding 1

- Event organizers are not obtaining an Open Park Space Permit for “spontaneous” events.
- Events that do not follow the Permitting Process are not monitored.
- There are no Parks procedures to identify “spontaneous” events.
- There are no dedicated resources to allow for the identification and monitoring of “spontaneous” events.

Recommendation

- The Parks and Recreation Department staff should conduct community outreach to inform the public of the Permitting Process.
- The Department should also work with other City Departments to help monitor park areas for potential events.

Finding 2

The current application requires 30 day advance notice. Nine applications were reviewed:

- Five Permit Applications were received less than 30 days before the event date.
- Four Permit Applications were received more than 30 days before the event date.

Recommendation

The Parks and Recreation Department should create a policy to enforce the 30-day Permit Application requirement.

Conclusion

Parks Department **met** the audit objectives as follows:

- Has documented Policies for the issuance of Park Usage Permits.
- Properly reviews and issues Park Usage Permits to the public.
- Properly charges and collects fees for the issuance of Park Usage Permits.

Parks Department **did not meet** the audit objectives as follows:

- “Spontaneous” events are not identified and monitored by staff.
- Permit Applications are accepted less than 30 days before an event.
- There is no policy for the enforcement of “spontaneous” events.

Management Response

Finding 1

“Parks will be adding a Social Media plan to inform and communicate with the community about process, guidelines and ordinances when applying for a permit on open space areas. Parks Department will emphasize all communication channels with EPPD and Code Enforcement when spontaneous events are reported.”

Management Response

Finding 2

“Parks and Recreation will update the Administrative Guidelines to incorporate the 30-day permit application requirement for the use of open spaces and sports areas within City parks. This update is scheduled for completion by October 2025.

1. Permit Issuance Process; As part of this update, we will develop a detailed Permit Issuance Process in accordance with Municipal Code 13.24. This process will establish clear, standardized procedures for the issuance of temporary permits for open spaces, facilities, and identifiable areas within City parks.”

Management Response (Cont.)

Finding 2 (Cont.)

“2. Permit Application Requirements: The updated guidelines will include the following permit application requirements:

- 30-day advance application for open spaces and sports fields.
- For facilities such as recreation centers and aquatics areas, a minimum of two weeks' advance application will be required.”

Requested Action

To accept the results of the Parks and Recreation Department – Park Usage Permit Audit and forward the Audit Report to City Council for action.